



NEW FRENCH REPORT ON UFOs AND DEFENCE

On 16 July 1999, a document was published in France, titled "UFOs and Defence: What must we be prepared for?" ("Les OVNI et la Défense: A quoi doit-on se préparer?"). This 90-page report is the result of an in-depth study of UFOs, covering many aspects of the subject, especially questions of defence.

The study was carried out over several years by an independent group of former "auditors" at the Institute of Higher Studies for National Defence (Institut des Hautes Etudes de Défense Nationale, or IHEDN), and qualified experts from various fields. Before its public release, it was sent to the President of the French Republic, Jacques Chirac, and to Prime Minister Lionel Jospin.

The report is prefaced by General Bernard Norlain of the French Air Force, former Director of IHEDN, and begins with a preamble by André Lebeau, former President of the National Centre for Space Studies (Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales, or CNES), the French equivalent of NASA. The collective author of the report is COMETA (the Committee for In-depth Studies), and the group is presided over by General Denis Letty of the Air Force, a former auditor (FA) of IHEDN.

A list of COMETA members is given at the beginning of the report. It includes:

General Bruno Lemoine of the Air Force (FA of IHEDN); Admiral Marc Merlo (FA of IHEDN); Michel Algrin, doctor of political sciences and attorney at law (FA of IHEDN); General Pierre Bescond, engineer for armaments (FA of IHEDN); Denis Blancher, chief national police superintendent at the Ministry of the Interior; Christian Marchal, chief engineer of the national Corps des Mines and research director at the National Office of Aeronautical Research (ONERA); and General Alain Orszag, PhD (physics), armaments engineer.

The committee also expresses its gratitude to outside contributors, including: Jean-Jacques Velasco, head of SEPR (Service d'Expertise des Phénomènes de Rentrée Atmosphérique) at CNES; François Louange, president of Fleximage, photo analysis specialist; and Air Force General Joseph Domange, general delegate of the Association of Auditors (AA) at IHEDN.

General Norlain tells in a short preface how this committee was created. General Letty came to see him in March 1995, when Norlain was Director of IHEDN, to discuss his project of a committee on UFOs. Norlain assured him of his interest and directed him to the AA of the IHEDN, which in turn gave its support. It is interesting to recall here that, 20 years ago, it was a report of that same Association

which led to the creation of GEPAN (Groupe d'Etude des Phénomènes Aérospatiaux Non-identifiés)—the first unit for UFO study at CNES. As a result, several members of the committee come from the AA of the IHEDN, joined by other experts. Most of them hold, or have held, important functions in defence, industry, teaching, research or various central administrations.

General Norlain expresses hope that this report will help develop new efforts nationally and an indispensable international cooperation. General Letty, as president of COMETA, points to the main theme of the report, which is that the accumulation of well-documented observations compels us now to consider all hypotheses (especially extraterrestrial) as to the origin of UFOs.

The committee then presents the contents of the study. In the first part, the authors discuss some remarkable UFO cases, both French and foreign. In the second part, they describe the present organisation of research in France and abroad, as well as studies done by scientists worldwide which may bring partial explanations in accordance with known laws of physics. The main global explanations are then reviewed, from secret aircraft to extraterrestrial manifestations. The third part examines measures to be taken regarding defence, from information to pilots, both civilian and military, to strategic, political

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and religious consequences, should the extraterrestrial hypothesis be confirmed.

Part I: Facts and Testimonies

Many of the cases selected are well known by most researchers, and need only be mentioned briefly here. They are:

- Testimonies of French pilots: M. Giraud, pilot of *Mirage IV* (1977); Colonel Bosc, fighter pilot (1976); Air France flight AF 3532 (Jan 1994).

- Aeronautical cases worldwide: Lakenheath, UK (1956); RB-47, USA (1957); Teheran, Iran (1976); San Carlos de Bariloche, Argentina (1995).

- Observations from the ground: Antananarivo, Madagascar (1954); observation of a saucer near the ground by a French pilot, J.-P. Fartek (1979); close-range observation over a missile site at Kapustin Jar, Russia (1989).

- Close encounters in France: Valensole, encounter of Maurice Masse (1965); Cussac, Cantal (1967); Trans-en-Provence (1981); Nancy, the so-called case of the Amaranth (1982).

There are also counter-examples of elucidated phenomena (two cases).

Although the selection is limited, it seems sufficient to convince an uninformed but open-minded reader of the reality of UFOs.

Part II: Present State of Knowledge

The second part, entitled "The present state of knowledge" ("Le point des connaissances"), surveys the organisation of official UFO research in France, from the first instructions given to the *Gendarmerie* in

1974 for the redaction of reports, to the creation of GEPAN in 1977, its organisation and its results: collection of more than 3,000 reports from the *Gendarmerie*, case studies and statistical analyses. It then surveys agreements passed by GEPAN and, later, SEPRA, with the air force and army, civilian aviation and other organs, such as civilian and military laboratories for the analysis of samples and photographs.

Regarding the methods and results, we are reminded of some famous cases (Trans-en-Provence, l'Amarante), and emphasis is directed to the catalogues of cases, notably of pilots (Weinstein catalogue) and "radar/visual", worldwide.

An historical note appears here with a quotation from General Twining's famous letter of September 1947, asserting the reality of UFOs. [The reference is to a then-secret memorandum sent by US General Nathan Twining to General George Schulgen. Twining states: "The phenomenon reported is something real and not visionary or fictitious... There are objects probably approximating the shape of a disk, of such appreciable size as to appear to be as large as man-made aircraft..." Twining notes the impressive aerial performance of these objects, their apparent metallic structure and other characteristics often associated with UFOs. — CNI Ed.]

The following chapter, "UFOs: hypotheses, attempts at modelling" ("OVNI: hypothèses, essais de modélisation"), discusses some models and hypotheses which are under study in several countries. Partial simulations have already been made for UFO propulsion, based on observations

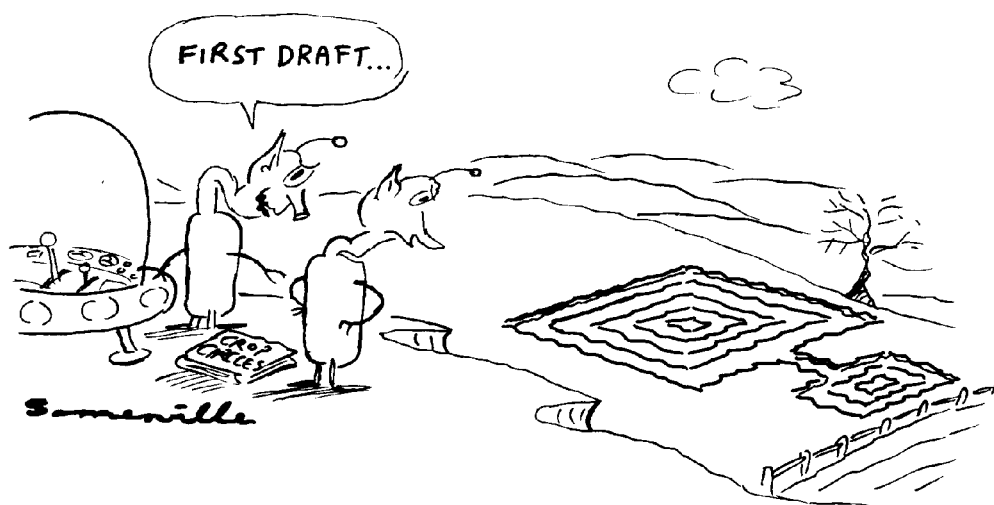
of aspects such as speed, movement and acceleration, engine failure of nearby vehicles, paralysis of witnesses, etc. One model is MHD (magneto-hydrodynamic) propulsion, already tested successfully in water, and which might be achieved in the atmosphere with superconducting circuits in a few decades. Other studies are briefly mentioned regarding both atmospheric and space propulsion (such as particle beams), antigravity and reliance on planetary and stellar impulsion.

The chapter also suggests that the failure of land-vehicle engines may be explained by microwave radiations. In fact, high-power hyperfrequency generators are under study in France and other countries, according to the report. One application is microwave weapons. Particle beams—for instance, proton beams which ionise the air and therefore become visible—might explain the observation of luminous beams. Microwaves might explain body paralysis.

In the same chapter, "global hypotheses" are considered next. The authors regard hoaxes as rare and easily detected. Some non-scientific hypotheses are put aside, such as conspiracies and manipulations by powerful secret groups, parapsychic phenomena and collective hallucinations. The hypothesis of secret [human] weapons is also regarded as very improbable. We are then left with various extraterrestrial hypotheses. One version has been developed in France by astronomers Jean-Claude Ribes and Guy Monnet, based on the "space islands" concept of American physicist O'Neill, and it is compatible with present-day physics.

The organisation of UFO research in the United States, Great Britain and Russia is surveyed rapidly. In the United States, the media and the polls show a marked interest and concern on the part of the public, but the official position, especially of the Air Force, is still one of denial—more precisely, that there is no threat to national security. Actually, declassified documents, released under FOIA, show another story: one of surveillance of nuclear installations by UFOs and the continued study of UFOs by the military and intelligence agencies.

The report stresses the importance in the United States



of private, independent associations. It mentions the "UFO Briefing Document", sent in 1995 to a thousand personalities worldwide, and the Sturrock workshop in 1997—both sponsored by Laurance Rockefeller. The "Briefing Document" has obviously been welcomed by the authors of the COMETA report.

The committee also notes the public emergence of alleged insiders such as [the late] Colonel Philip Corso, and considers that his testimony may be partly significant as to the real situation in the US, in spite of many critics.

The report briefly describes the situation in Great Britain, with a special mention of Nick Pope [ex-Ministry of Defence, author of two books on UFOs], and poses the question of the possible existence of secret studies pursued jointly with American services. It also mentions research in Russia and the release of some information, notably by the KGB in 1991.

PART III: UFOs and Defence

The third part, "UFOs and defence" ("Les OVNI et la défense"), states that, if it is true that no hostile UFO action has been proved yet, at least some actions of "intimidation" have been recorded in France (case of the *Mirage IV*, for instance). Since the extraterrestrial origin of UFOs cannot be ruled out, it is therefore necessary to study the consequences of that hypothesis, not only at the strategic level but also at political, religious and media/public information levels.

The first chapter of Part III is devoted to prospective strategies and it begins with fundamental questions: "What if extraterrestrials [exist]? What intentions and what strategy can we deduce from their behaviour?" Such questions open a more controversial part of the report.

Possible motivations of extraterrestrial visitors are explored here, such as protection of planet Earth against the dangers of nuclear war, suggested, for instance, by UFOs' repeated flying over nuclear missile sites.

The committee then ponders the possible repercussions on the behaviour, official or not, of different nation-states, and focuses on the possibility of secret, privileged contacts which might be "attributed to the United States". The attitude of the US is seen as "most strange" since the 1947 wave and the Roswell event. Since that time, a policy of increasing secrecy seems to have

been applied, which might be explained by the protection at all cost of military technological superiority to be acquired from the study of UFOs.

Next, the report tackles the question: "What measures must we take now?" At the least, whatever the nature of UFOs, they necessitate "critical vigilance", in particular regarding the risk of "destabilising manipulations". A kind of "cosmic vigilance" should be applied by the elites, nationally and internationally, in order to prevent any shocking surprise, erroneous interpretation and hostile manipulation.

Nationally, COMETA urges the strengthening of SEPRA and recommends the creation of a cell at the highest level of government, entrusted with the development of hypotheses, strategy and preparation of cooperation agreements with European and other foreign countries. A further step would be that European states and the European Union undertake diplomatic action towards the United States within the framework of political and strategic alliances.

A key question of the report is: "What situations must we be prepared for?" The report mentions such situations as: extraterrestrial moves for official contact; discovery of a [UFO/alien] base within the territory of Europe; invasion (deemed improbable) and localised or massive attack; and manipulation or deliberate disinformation aiming at destabilising other states.

COMETA devotes special attention to "aeronautical implications", with detailed recommendations aimed at various personnel, such as air staff, controllers, meteorologists and engineers. It also makes recommendations at the scientific and technical levels, aimed at developing research with potential benefits for defence and industry.

The report further explores the political and religious implications of UFOs, using as a model the perspective of our own exploration of space: how would we do it, and how would we handle contacts with less advanced civilisations?

Such an approach is not new to well-informed readers of the abundant ufological literature, but it has a special value here, being treated seriously at such a level. The media/publicity implications are not forgotten, with the problems of disinformation, fear of ridicule, and manipulation by certain groups.

In its conclusion, COMETA claims that the physical reality of UFOs, under control of intelligent beings, is "quasi-certain". Only one hypothesis takes into account the available data: the hypothesis of extraterrestrial visitors. This hypothesis is of course unproved, but has far-reaching consequences. The goals of these alleged visitors remain unknown, but must be the subject of speculations and prospective scenarios.

In its final recommendations, the COMETA report stresses again the need to:



"It's these damn obsidian eyes ... you got any designer contacts that'll give me a Drew Barrymore look?"

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- 1) inform all decision-makers and persons in positions of responsibility;
- 2) reinforce means of investigation and study at SEPRAs;
- 3) have UFO detection taken into account by agencies engaged in space surveillance;
- 4) create a strategic cell [for UFO study/analysis] at the highest state level;
- 5) undertake diplomatic action towards the United States for cooperation on this "capital question";
- 6) study measures which might be necessary in case of emergencies.

UFO CASES CITED IN REPORT

The authors of the French UFO report selected a small but impressive sample of UFO cases to illustrate the seriousness of the subject. Many of these cases will be familiar to experienced ufologists, but not necessarily to all readers. Here is a brief description of most of the cases highlighted in the COMETA report:

• **Testimony of French pilot M. Giraud, 7 March 1977:** Giraud and his navigator were flying a *Mirage IV* jet at night near Dijon, France, when they saw a bright light rapidly closing in. The light tailed them at a distance of 1,500 metres (4,920 feet), though they made evasive turns. They radioed a military radar site, but the UFO did not show on radar.

• **Testimony of French fighter pilot Colonel Claude Bosc, 3 March 1976:** On a night training flight in a T-33, Bosc saw a bright light approach at high speed on a

collision course. His jet was then enveloped in green phosphorescent light for several seconds. Radar showed nothing, but two other pilots saw the encounter from a distance.

• **Air France Flight 3532, 28 January 1994:** Pilot and copilot of an Airbus 320-111, flying in daylight near Paris at 39,000 feet, reported seeing a very large disc-like craft about 30 miles away and slightly below them. Military radar confirmed the presence of an object about 250 metres (820 feet) in diameter. The object was observed visually and on radar for about 50 seconds, then suddenly disappeared.

• **Lakenheath RAF Base, UK, 13 August 1956:** Extraordinary UFO events occurred over a span of six hours, involving very clear radar tracks of more than a dozen objects, sometimes travelling over 4,000 miles (6,437 km) per hour, sometimes slower than 100 mph (160 kph). Jets were scrambled and encountered UFO traffic, but the pilots could not identify it.

• **RB-47 case, USA, 17 July 1957:** "Arguably the most important UFO case in history," says US researcher Jerome Clark. Flight crew of an RB-47 reconnaissance jet engaged a UFO for nearly two hours over Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas. The UFO was simultaneously tracked visually and by ground and air radar, and a signal from the UFO was tracked as well.

• **Teheran, Iran, 18 September 1976:** Two F-4 jets of the Iranian Air Force separately engaged a brilliant, fast-moving UFO, tracking it visually and on radar. On

approaching the UFO, the jets' onboard weapons and control functions repeatedly failed, forcing retreat. A second UFO object was seen to separate from the main UFO and appeared to land.

• **San Carlos de Bariloche, Argentina, 1 August 1995:** A commercial jet on approach to Bariloche airport reported a UFO flying alongside. During the plane's descent, the airport experienced a total electrical blackout, forcing the pilot to abort the landing and circle around for a second attempt. Meanwhile, the UFO flew upwards and disappeared from view.

• **Antananarivo, Madagascar, 16 August 1954:** A brilliant green fireball was observed crossing the sky, trailing flames. As it approached, multiple witnesses said it resembled a metallic oval object as big as a DC-4 aircraft. As the object passed overhead at low altitude, the city experienced a major electrical blackout.

• **Kapustin Jar, ex-USSR, 28–29 July 1989:** Military personnel reported a clearly visible disc-shaped UFO hovering low over an army missile base and shining a beam of light down on a weapons depot. The sighting lasted over 90 minutes. A similar report occurred later that night at another nearby base.

• **Valensole, Basses-Alpes, France, 1 July 1965:** Farmer Maurice Masse encountered a landed UFO and two small humanoids in his lavender field at about 6 am. On approach, he became paralysed but remained conscious while the beings boarded the craft and flew away. Masse suffered massive fatigue for several weeks, and nothing but stunted weeds grew in the landing area for years afterwards. This case was extensively investigated by French authorities.

• **Trans-en-Provence, France, 8 January 1981:** A disc-shaped metallic UFO was observed by farmer Renato Niccolai to land briefly in his alfalfa field at about 5 pm, then lift off and fly away. Investigation showed that a very heavy object, weighing maybe four to five tonnes, had compressed the soil in the landing area, and plants were obviously affected.

(Source: Report by Gildas Bourdais, <GBourdais@aol.com>, for CNI News, vol. 5, no. 11, 1 August 1999, <CNINews1@aol.com>. Requests for translation and publication rights to the full report should be sent to M. Michel Algrin, 25 boulevard St-Germain, 75005 Paris, France.

